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AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1. (Canceled).
2. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 6, wherein the step of debiting funds from said financial account of said first party further comprises holding said funds in an escrow account until an escrow release event has transpired, and wherein the method further comprises the step of releasing said funds from said escrow account prior to the step of disbursing said funds to a financial account associated with said second party.
3. (Original) The method of claim 2, wherein holding said funds in an escrow account until an escrow release event has transpired comprises holding said funds in an escrow account until an occurrence of at least one of a receipt by said first party of goods, services, or other value from said second party and a lapse of a predefined period of time within which said first party may evaluate said goods, services, or other value from said second party.
4. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 6, wherein receiving from at least one of said first party and said second party a request to debit a financial account associated with said first party comprises receiving a request to debit a financial account associated with said first party selected from the group consisting of a transaction card account, a demand deposit account, a credit line, and a money market account.
5. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 6, wherein disbursing said funds to a financial account associated with said second party comprises disbursing said funds to a financial account associated with said second party selected from the group consisting of a transaction card account, a demand deposit account, a credit line, a digital cash account, and a money market account.
6. (Currently Amended) A method of facilitating commercial transactions, ~~which~~ said method comprises comprising the steps of:

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registering at least one of a first party and a second party with a transaction mechanism having a financial account identifier for identifying a financial account associated with said first party;

receiving, from at least one of said first party and said second party, a request to debit a financial account of said first party to effectuate a transaction between said first party and said second party;

receiving from at least one of said first party and said second party transaction information relating to said transaction between said first party and said second party;

determining whether said transaction is acceptable based upon at least one of said transaction information and said request to debit said financial account associated with said first party;

providing a shipping agent configured to provide at least one of goods, services, and other items of value from said second party to said first party;

debiting funds from said financial account of said first party;

disbursing said funds to a financial account associated with said second party; and

crediting said funds to said financial account associated with said second party.

7. (Original) The method of claim 6, wherein providing said transaction mechanism with a financial account identifier for identifying a financial account associated with said first party comprises providing a financial account identifier selected from the group consisting of a card number and a demand deposit account number.

8. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 6, wherein registering at least one of said first party and said second party comprises providing said transaction mechanism with a financial account identifier for identifying a financial account associated with said second party.

9. (Original) The method of claim 8, wherein providing said transaction mechanism with a financial account identifier for identifying a financial account associated with said second party comprises providing a financial account identifier selected from the group consisting of a card number and a demand deposit account number.

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10. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 6, wherein receiving transaction information relating to said transaction from at least one of said first party and said second party comprises at least one of receiving a financial account identifier associated with the financial account associated with said first party and receiving a financial account identifier associated with said financial account associated with said second party.

11-14. (Canceled).

15. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 6, further comprising the step of receiving notification that said first party has received goods, services, or other value shipped from said second party to said first party.

16. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 6, further comprising the step of providing an intermediary to facilitate said transaction between said first party and said second party.

17-18. (Canceled)

19. (Currently Amended) The method of claim ~~18~~ 6, wherein the step of providing a shipping agent further comprises maintaining by said transaction mechanism at least one of said first party's and said second party's identity and address in confidence with respect to either said first or said second party.

20. (Canceled).

21. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 25, wherein in response to a transaction request from at least one of said first party and said second party, said transaction mechanism debits funds from a financial account associated with said first party, holds said funds in an escrow account until an escrow release event has transpired, releases said funds from said escrow account, and then disburses said funds to a financial account associated with said second party.

22. (Original) The system of claim 21, wherein said escrow release event comprises at least one of receipt by a purchaser of goods, services, or other value from a seller and the lapse of a predefined period of time within which said purchaser may evaluate

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said goods, services, or other value.

23. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 25, wherein said financial account associated with said first party is selected from the group consisting of a transaction card account, a demand deposit account, a credit line, and a money market account.

24. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 25, wherein said financial account associated with said second party is selected from the group consisting of a transaction card account, a demand deposit account, a credit line, and digital cash account, and a money market account.

25. (Currently Amended) A system for transferring financial tender from a financial account associated with a first party to a financial account associated with a second party, ~~which system comprises~~ comprising:

a transaction mechanism; configured to communicate with a first party and a second party.

~~a first party in communication with said transaction mechanism;~~

~~a second party in communication with said transaction mechanism;~~

wherein said transaction mechanism is configured to receive from at least one of said first party and said second party ~~registers with said transaction mechanism registration information, said registration information providing to provide~~ said transaction mechanism with at least one financial account identifier to identify at least one financial account associated with at least one of said first party and said second party;

wherein said transaction mechanism is configured to communicate in ~~communication~~ with a financial account associated with said first party and a financial account associated with said second party; and

wherein, in response to a transaction request from at least one of said first party and said second party, said transaction mechanism is configured to debit ~~debits~~ funds from a said financial account associated with said first party and disburse ~~disburses~~ said funds to a said financial account associated with said second party, wherein said transaction request includes transaction information relating to a transfer of funds between said first party and said second party, and wherein said transaction mechanism authenticates at least

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one of said first party and said second party based upon said transaction information; and
a shipping agent associated with said transaction mechanism, said shipping agent configured to provide at least one of goods, services, and other items of value from said second party to said first party.

26-33. (Canceled).

34. (Previously Presented) The computer-readable storage medium of claim 38, wherein the step of debiting funds from said financial account of said first party further comprises holding said funds in an escrow account until an escrow release event has transpired, and wherein said processing instructions further direct a computer to perform the step of releasing said funds from said escrow account prior to the step of disbursing said funds to a financial account associated with said second party.

35. (Original) The computer-readable storage medium of claim 34, wherein the step of holding said funds in an escrow account until an escrow release event has transpired comprises holding said funds in an escrow account until an occurrence of at least one of receipt by said first party of goods, services, or other value from said second party and a lapse of a predefined period of time within which said first party may evaluate said goods, services, or other value from said second party.

36. (Previously Presented) The computer-readable storage medium of claim 38, wherein the step of receiving from at least one of said first party and said second party a request to debit a financial account associated with said first party further comprises receiving a request to debit a financial account associated with said first party selected from the group consisting of a transaction card account, a demand deposit account, a credit line, a digital cash account, and a money market account.

37. (Previously Presented) The computer-readable storage medium of claim 38, wherein the step of disbursing said funds to a financial account associated with said second party comprises disbursing said funds to a financial account associated with said second party selected from the group consisting of a transaction card account, a demand deposit account, a credit line, and a money market account.

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38. (Currently Amended) A computer-readable storage medium encoded with a plurality of processing instructions for implementing a method performed by a transaction mechanism for transferring financial tender from a financial account associated with a first party to a financial account associated with a second party to facilitate commercial transactions, said processing instructions directing a computer to perform a method comprising the steps of:

registering at least one of a first party and a second party with a transaction mechanism having a financial account identifier for identifying a financial account associated with said first party;

receiving from at least one of said first party and said second party a request to debit a financial account of said first party to effectuate a transaction between said first party and said second party;

receiving from at least one of said first party and said second party transaction information relating to said transaction between said first party and said second party;

determining whether said transaction is acceptable based upon at least one of said transaction information and said request to debit said financial account associated with said first party;

providing a shipping agent configured to provide at least one of goods, services, and other items of value from said second party to said first party;

debiting funds from said financial account of said first party;

disbursing said funds to a financial account associated with said second party; and

crediting said funds to said financial account associated with said second party.

39. (Original) The computer-readable storage medium of claim 38, wherein the step of providing said transaction mechanism with a financial account identifier for identifying a financial account associated with said first party comprises providing a financial account identifier selected from the group consisting of a card number and a demand deposit account number.

40. (Previously Presented) The computer-readable storage medium of claim 38, wherein the step of registering at least one of said first party and said second party comprises providing said transaction mechanism with a financial account identifier for identifying a

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financial account associated with said second party.

41. (Original) The computer-readable storage medium of claim 40, wherein the step of providing said transaction mechanism with a financial account identifier for identifying a financial account associated with said second party comprises providing a financial account identifier selected from the group consisting of a card number and a demand deposit account number.

42. (Previously Presented) The computer-readable storage medium of claim 38, wherein the step of receiving transaction information relating to said transaction from at least one of said first party and said second party comprises at least one of receiving a financial account identifier associated with the financial account associated with said first party and receiving a financial account identifier associated with said financial account associated with said second party.

43-46. (Canceled).

47. (Previously Presented) The computer-readable storage medium of claim 38, further comprising the step of receiving notification that said first party has received goods, services, or other value shipped from said second party to said first party.

48. (Previously Presented) The computer-readable storage medium of claim 38, further comprising the step of providing an intermediary to facilitate said transaction between said first party and said second party.

49-50. (Canceled)

51. (Currently Amended) The computer-readable storage medium of claim ~~50~~ 38, wherein the step of providing a shipping agent further comprises maintaining by said transaction mechanism at least one of said first party's and said second party's identity and address in confidence with respect to either said first party or said second party.

52. (Canceled).

53. (Previously Presented) The device of claim 57, wherein said central processor

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further is operative with a transaction mechanism to hold said funds in an escrow account until an escrow release event has transpired and to release said funds from said escrow account prior to disbursing said funds to a financial account associated with said second party.

54. (Previously Presented) The device of claim 57, further comprising a network interface in communication with said central processor via a system bus.

55. (Previously Presented) The device of claim 57, wherein said storage device comprises a customer transaction records database and a customer information records database.

56. (Previously Presented) The device of claim 57, wherein said memory comprises a risk management module, a transaction control module, and an authentication module.

57. (Currently Amended) A device for transferring financial tender from a financial account associated with a first party to a financial account associated with a second party, which device comprises:

- a central processor;
- a storage device in communication with said central processor via a system bus;
- a memory ~~connected~~ coupled to said central processor, wherein said memory includes an operating system for storing and executing a program which controls operation of said central processor;

wherein said central processor is configured to operate ~~operative~~ with a transaction mechanism to:

- receive from at least one of said first party and said second party a request to debit a financial account of said first party to effectuate a transaction between said first party and said second party, wherein said financial account associated with said first party is selected from the group consisting of a transaction card account, a demand deposit account, a credit line, a digital cash account, and a money market account;

- receive from at least one of said first party and said second party transaction information relating to said transaction between said first party and said second party;

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determine whether said transaction is acceptable based upon at least one of said transaction information and said request to debit said financial account associated with said first party;

debit funds from said financial account of said first party;

disburse said funds to a financial account associated with said second party; and
operate with a shipping agent configured to provide at least one of goods, services,
and other items of value from said second party to said first party.

58. (Original) The device of claim 57, wherein said financial account associated with said second party is selected from the group consisting of a transaction card account, a demand deposit account, a credit line, and a money market account.

59-60. (Canceled).

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